

Family Survey Guidelines

Providing Parents/Guardians the Opportunity to participate in the Family Survey is a Requirement!!

In accordance with federal reporting requirements LEAs **MUST** provide parents/guardians the opportunity to participate in the family survey. It is recommended that LEAs document the offer to participate whenever the opportunity is provided. This is an area Monitoring will discuss during on-site monitoring.

Family survey scan forms from school districts and Co-ops **MUST** be received no later than **June 30th** to be included in the data collection for that school year. The DDS programs have until July 15th since they operate throughout June. The IDEA Data & Research Office spends an additional 2-4 weeks preparing the surveys for scanning. Surveys not received by the deadlines are processed for the following year.

Family Survey Strategies

LEAs with high response rates on the family surveys implement some or all of the following strategies for improving response rates. The most important strategy is to communicate with parents and staff.

Communication is KEY

Communicate with parents/guardians as to why the survey is being conducted.

The LEA staff should:

- Inform parents that the survey is part of a federal data collection requiring LEAs to provide parents/guardians the opportunity to participate in the survey;
- Inform parents how important their answers are for the improvement of services to children with disabilities;
- Review the survey format with the parents; and
- Discuss any questions on the survey believed to be unclear.

Strategies with Staff

Be proactive

Probably the single most important tip we can give is to actively monitor response rates within your district and take measures to address low rates. Some districts discuss their Family Survey Response Rates (RR) in formal meetings, others distribute memorandums, and still others have implemented competitions between and/or within districts to reward those with highest RR's.

Communicate expectations

Assuming you have followed step 1, it is crucial to communicate your expectations for improving response rates to the staff involved in distributing these surveys. The introduction of accountability measures will not be effective if communication is poor. For example, districts requesting many surveys but with very low response rates may be experiencing the results of poorly communicated expectations.

Incorporate into annual conference

The most logical time to distribute these surveys is during the annual review conference.

Note: We strongly suggest that you distribute surveys face-to-face. Historically, response rates for surveys mailed to the recipients are very low, and distribution of the survey through the student is unlikely to be reliably effective.

Consider in-house data entry

Some districts have internalized the data entry process by utilizing in-house staff to enter responses to Family Surveys into the online system (Link: [Online Family Surveys](#)). This method ensures that surveys do not get damaged or lost during transit through the Postal system.

Note: This method still requires your staff to maintain confidentiality of results as well as staff time to enter responses into the system.

Use all opportunities to make contact with parents

Depending upon your district's methods, there may be multiple opportunities to distribute the Family Survey during the annual conference.

- Distribute the survey while parents are waiting to enter the conference room.
- Distribute the survey at the end of the conference.
- Distribute the survey at parent teacher conferences for parents who do not attend the scheduled annual conference.

Family Survey Online Instructions

To complete surveys online:

1. Visit Special Education Website: <https://arksped.k12.ar.us>
2. Click on 'Special Education Surveys' icon on the left hand sidebar under the main menu
3. Click on the last link in the list [Family Outcomes Survey - School Age & Early Childhood](#)
4. Enter User ID: *Your LEA Number*
5. Enter Password: _____
6. Complete and submit survey

Note: Family survey passcodes are different from MySped Resource passwords. To request your family survey passcodes, send an email to jafields@ualr.edu.

Family Survey Instructions

- ✓ Only use the family surveys with six racial/ethnic categories. If your Scantron® forms do not include six racial/ethnic categories please request current forms and discard the previous forms. Remember that surveys submitted to IDEA for processing must be on original Scantron® forms and must be completed in pencil.
- ✓ There are four areas which an LEA should fill out prior to giving the survey to the parent if possible — LEA Number, Building Code or Resident LEA Number, Race/Ethnicity (select all that apply), and Disability.
Note: The corresponding bubbles MUST be filled in under the LEA Number. Failure to fill in the bubbles can result in a noncompliance for Indicator 20.
- ✓ Fill out the LEA number on each survey. Surveys sent to districts are tracked by district and survey number. A LEA Supervisor with more than one district could in error give one districts survey to another. Without the LEA number on the survey the original district would get the credit not the actual district that had the survey filled out.
- ✓ If you want survey reports at the building level (school age) or by resident LEA (early childhood) please be sure to fill in that portion of the survey form and send a request to jafields@ualr.edu.
- ✓ If an LEA prints the survey from the internet or photo copies a scan form, the LEA is responsible for entering the survey results into the online survey form.
Note: See online instructions on the next page.
- ✓ Photo copied forms sent to the IDEA Data & Research Office will be returned to the LEA.
- ✓ Document the offering of the family survey during the Annual Review Conference or any other time. Be sure that the documentation has the date the survey opportunity was provided; the method of delivery (face-to-face (scan form, photo copy, internet access, mail); and whether or not the parent accepted the opportunity.

To request scan forms from IDEA Data & Research Office - email Nancy Rea at nerea@ualr.edu.

Please include the following in your email:

1. District LEA Number(s)
2. Type of Surveys (Early Childhood/School Age)
3. Total Number of Surveys for each LEA
4. Contact Name and Phone Number
5. Mailing Address (please include both Street and P.O. Box address if available)